

Chapter 1: Executive Summary

This section summarizes the SDEIS and describes the proposed action, the purpose and need for the project, the alternatives under consideration, and the major findings.

Introduction

The City of Redmond proposes to extend Bear Creek Parkway from its current western terminus at Leary Way to Redmond Way, at a location between 159th Place NE and 161st Avenue NE (see **Figure 1.1**). This Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) evaluates four build alternatives (Alternatives 1, 2, 3, and 4) and a No Action Alternative (see Chapter 2). A preferred alternative will be selected following release of the SDEIS and consideration of agency and public comments received on the document. The preferred alternative will be identified in the Final SEIS.

The SDEIS is a project-level document that supplements the *City of Redmond Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Statement* (City of Redmond, 1995) and is part of a phased review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Phased review is a process in which programmatic issues or policies are addressed in a broad environmental document (e.g., the Comprehensive Plan EIS), and project-specific issues are analyzed in a more focused environmental document (e.g., this SDEIS). Phased review “allows agencies and the public to focus on issues that are ready for decision and exclude from consideration issues already decided or not yet ready” (WAC 197-11-060 (5)(b)).

Proposed Action

The Bear Creek Parkway Extension project would construct a new four- to five-lane roadway between the western end of the existing Bear Creek Parkway and Redmond Way (see **Figure 1.2** for a typical cross-section layout). The roadway would consist of a single 11-foot inside driving lane in each direction and a single 12-foot outside driving lane in each direction. A 12-foot left-turn lane would be provided at all intersections. A 13-foot sidewalk/landscaping area is planned for both sides of the roadway. The total section width would be 84 feet, except at intersections where additional turn-lanes may add additional width to the roadway. No bicycle lanes are proposed, in accordance with the Bicycle Network Concept. This Concept, developed as part of the Downtown Transportation Master Plan (DTMP), includes conversion of the BNSF Railroad corridor to include a multi-use trail to carry most east-west bicycle traffic through Downtown. Pedestrians would be accommodated with sidewalks and crosswalks at all major intersections. A stormwater drainage system would also be constructed as part of the project. This system would include the addition of new storm drains and wet ponds and a new outfall to the Sammamish River.

Purpose and Need

The extension of Bear Creek Parkway has been a planned link in the Redmond street network for many years. It is listed in the *Redmond Comprehensive Plan* (RCP, City of Redmond 1995b:124) as a needed project. The recently completed *Downtown Transportation Master Plan* (DTMP, 2002) confirmed the need for this link in the downtown street network. One of the DTMP's goals is to strengthen the economic viability of Downtown and enhance the area for bicycles and pedestrians. This involves reducing the amount of through traffic in Downtown to improve circulation and access.

A Transportation Facilities Plan is included in the RCP, which outlines the specific projects and improvements needed over the next 12 to 15 years to achieve transportation service goals. The Bear Creek Parkway Extension is part of the

Transportation Facility Plan (TFP), listed as project RED-TFP-050a. It appears on the TFP Map (TR-3A) and Table (TR-5) as a minor arterial to be constructed. The City Center element is also included in the RCP, which includes a long-range transportation plan specifically for the downtown area. The City Center Arterial Street Plan (Map CC-3) shows the Bear Creek Parkway Extension as a collector arterial. The proposed extension connects to Redmond Way west of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad corridor, to 159th Place NE, and to Leary Way. However, the Bear Creek Parkway Extension's specific alignment is neither specified nor constrained by the RCP.

The Bear Creek Parkway Extension is also identified as an important link in the Downtown Transportation Master Plan (DTMP). This Plan's goal is to develop a transportation concept for Downtown Redmond that enhances mobility and economic vitality, and maintains a people-friendly environment. The DTMP culminated in an Action Agenda for Implementation, which outlines specific projects needed to achieve the Downtown Redmond vision. One of the DTMP's goals is to provide better downtown connections, including conversion of Redmond Way and Cleveland Street to two-way operations, the addition of roadway connections across the BNSF Railroad corridor, and completion of the east-west Bear Creek Parkway connection. Because some aspects of the Action Agenda depend on completion of the Bear Creek Parkway connection, the City Council has elected to pursue this connection as the first project.

A primary function of the proposed Bear Creek Extension will be to provide an additional connection for east-west traffic traveling through Downtown Redmond. Population and traffic in Redmond and the surrounding area is expected to increase substantially in the next 20 years. By providing an additional east-west route, Redmond Way and Cleveland Street will be able to serve more local uses including bus, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic. The extension of Bear Creek Parkway also provides an opportunity to enhance north-south connections in Downtown.

Other benefits of implementing the proposed facility include the following:

- Increasing the Downtown street network's connectivity so that motor vehicle circulation and access within Downtown are improved, strengthening this area as a local and regional destination;
- Strengthening travel connections between Old Town and Redmond Town Center in the interests of increasing the commercial synergy and economic vitality of Downtown;
- Improving public transit (bus) access and circulation to and within Downtown to support a higher transit mode share, thereby growing ridership and encouraging increased King County Metro and Sound Transit service levels;
- Improving connections to and within the Downtown area for pedestrians and bicycles, in support of increased walking and bicycling activity so that the area is strengthened economically and made more attractive as a destination;
- Protecting and enhancing Redmond's unique community character, as expressed in its Downtown urban design, architecture and physical setting;
- Preserving the elements of Downtown that are important to Redmond's image and legacy as a "green city" with abundant trees, open space, wildlife, clean air and good water quality;
- Providing a new, attractive gateway to the Downtown area; and
- Encouraging development and redevelopment of Downtown in a manner consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

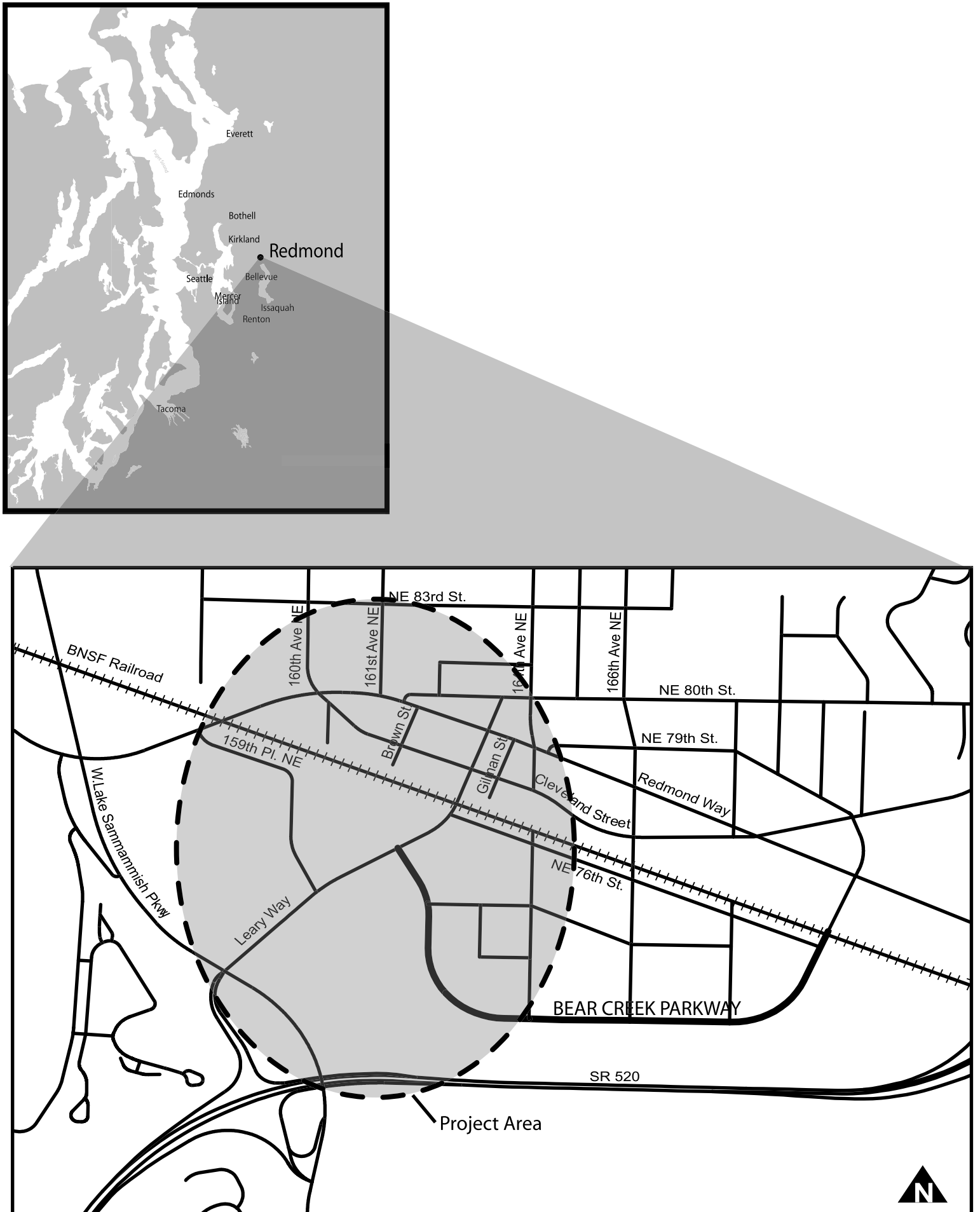


Figure 1.1 Project Vicinity

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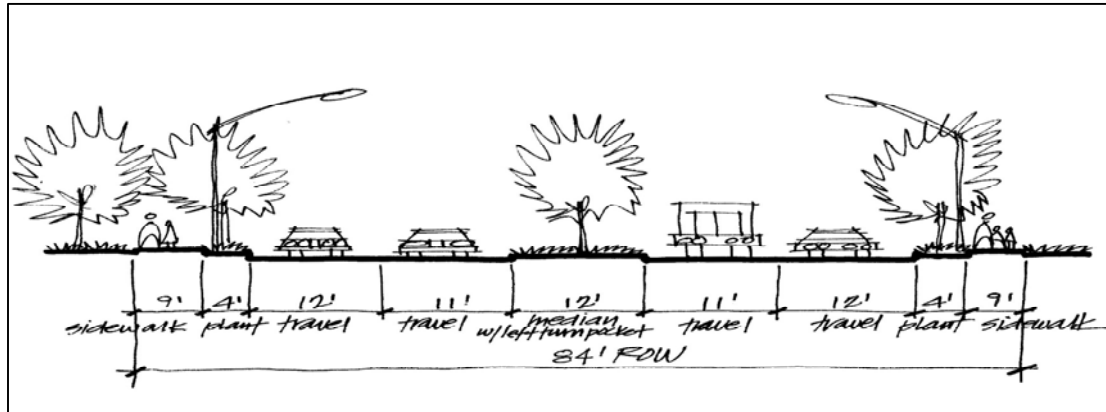


Figure 1.2: Bear Creek Parkway Extension: Typical Section

Alternatives

The alternatives vary primarily in their alignment, and are described in detail in Chapter 2. This section briefly summarizes each alternative.

No Action

The No Action Alternative would maintain the Bear Creek Parkway's existing configuration.

Alternative 1

Alternative 1 (see Figure 2.2) would provide a new connection, beginning at the Bear Creek Parkway/164th Avenue NE intersection on the south side of Town Center and connecting to 159th Place NE at Leary Way. 159th Place NE between Leary Way and Redmond Way would be realigned and reconstructed to provide an additional lane in each direction. Leary Way between 159th Place NE and West Lake Sammamish Parkway would be widened to the south by one lane, to accommodate the new Bear Creek Parkway/Leary Way intersection. Figure 2.3 shows a conceptual stormwater layout for Alternative 1.

Alternative 2

Alternative 2 (see Figure 2.4) would provide a new connection beginning at the Bear Creek Parkway/NE 74th Street intersection at the entrance to Town Center. This new roadway would be aligned just northeast of the existing 162nd Avenue NE alignment and would curve around to the west, running parallel to and south of the BNSF Railroad corridor. 159th Place NE would be partially reconstructed to add an additional lane in each direction. Figure 2.5 shows a conceptual stormwater layout for Alternative 2.

Alternative 3

Alternative 3 (see Figure 2.6) would provide a new connection beginning at the Bear Creek Parkway/NE 74th Street intersection and would run generally north, crossing the BNSF railroad corridor and Cleveland Street and connecting to Redmond Way at 161st Avenue NE. New intersections would be created at Bear Creek Parkway and Cleveland Street and a southern leg would be added to the 161st Avenue NE/Redmond Way intersection. Figure 2.7 shows a conceptual stormwater layout for Alternative 3.

Alternative 4

Alternative 4 (see Figure 2.8) is a hybrid of Alternatives 2 and 3, and would provide an east-west connection to Redmond Way and a northern connection to 161st Ave. NE. Figure 2.9 shows a conceptual stormwater layout for Alternative 4.

Significant Areas of Controversy and Issues to be Resolved

As reflected in the agency and public comments received during the scoping period, major issues of concern include:

- How the project will improve transportation in the Downtown Redmond area;
- What the impacts will be to natural resources, particularly the open space and heron rookery areas; and
- What the impacts will be to businesses in the project area.

All of these issues are addressed in the SDEIS. A Biological Assessment, if required for permitting reasons, will be prepared after selection of a preferred alternative. A Biological Assessment is the process by which the project area is studied to determine if the proposed project will affect threatened or endangered species or their habitat. Survey to identify trees to be removed and heron/raptor nests will be completed prior to construction.

Major Findings

The Redmond Comprehensive Plan (RCP) and Downtown Transportation Master Plan (DTMP) both identify a need for an additional east-west connection within Downtown Redmond. This connection is an important part of implementing the DTMP's goals, because it would provide an additional connection for pass-through traffic. It would allow other downtown streets to serve more local functions, and would enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist environment. It also has the potential to provide additional connectivity within Downtown Redmond for all modes of travel including autos, transit, freight, bicycles, and pedestrians.

Analyses of transportation issues were completed for the four build alternatives and the No Action Alternative. In the transportation analysis, the No Action Alternative assumed the implementation of all elements of the DTMP *except* the Bear Creek Parkway extension for the future design year.

Criteria including traffic delays at key intersections, travel times between critical points in the study area, pedestrian and bicycle connections, transit service, parking, and freight mobility were examined for each alternative to determine which would best meet the project purpose and need. Results show that no single alternative outperformed all others in all of the transportation criteria. Overall, Alternative 4, which assumes both new east-west and north-south connections, would provide the greatest benefit to the transportation system with respect to congestion reduction, non-motorist mobility, and freight movement. Alternative 4 shows improved future transportation conditions compared to the No Action Alternative.

The four build alternatives and the No Action Alternative were also analyzed to evaluate their impacts on the natural and built environments. The No Action Alternative would clearly have the fewest impacts on the environment because it represents no change to

existing conditions. All of the build alternatives would result in some impacts due to right-of-way acquisition, business displacements, vegetation loss, increased impervious area, and increased noise levels. Alternatives 1 and 4 would create the most overall disturbance. Alternative 1 would have the greatest impact on the natural environment, because it requires acquisition of existing open space and would create an additional barrier to wildlife movement between the Redmond Town Center (RTC) Open Space and Marymoor Park. Alternative 1 would also have the greatest impact on existing trails and recreation facilities, but would have the least potential impact on the heron rookery because it is located furthest from the existing nest sites.

In terms of the built environment, Alternative 4 would require the most right-of-way acquisition and would displace the most existing structures and businesses. All alternatives have the potential to encounter hazardous materials either along 159th Place NE or on the (City-owned) former King County Shop site parcel. Alternatives 2 and 4 would use the largest portion of the shop site parcel. Alternative 1 would have the most significant visual impacts and the most potential to affect archaeological sites. Approximate costs for the Bear Creek Parkway Alternatives are shown in **Table 1.1**. These costs include design, right-of-way, earthwork, structures, pavement, drainage, utility work, traffic control, environmental mitigation, and contingencies. More detailed cost estimate worksheets are contained in Appendix D. Alternative 4, at just under \$35 million, is expected to be the most expensive option, followed by Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

Table 1.1: Costs

Alternative	Cost (2003 dollars in millions)
No Action	
Alternative 1	\$30.1
Alternative 2	\$27.2
Alternative 3	\$25.3
Alternative 4	\$34.8

Table 1.2 summarizes the environmental impacts. The alternatives were rated based on the magnitude of their impacts on the various environmental resources. The ratings are expressed on a relative scale, ranging from “more negative impact” to “more positive impact”. This scale was developed to accommodate the fact that although “impacts” by definition are typically negative, an alternative can have positive impacts (particularly in terms of the transportation system).

Table 1.2 is intended to function as a tool for comparing the relative impacts of the various alternatives under consideration. Each alternative is compared against existing conditions except for the transportation measures, where each build alternative is compared to the future “No Action” Alternative. The future “No Action” Alternative for the transportation analysis assumes implementation of all of the DTMP improvements *except* Bear Creek Parkway and assumes year 2022 traffic projections. The No Action Alternative is not given a ranking in the table for transportation, because it served as the baseline for comparison. For the other environmental measures, the No Action Alternative represents no change from existing conditions, so it has “little or no impact” on these environmental issues.

The rankings are based on the Study Team's assessment of the data collected. Impacts were in some cases quantifiable (e.g., traffic delays, right-of-way acquisition), but in most cases involved qualitative comparisons based on many attributes. For example, recreation impacts took into account effects on existing open space, existing parks, existing trails, and a proposed future trail. All of the alternatives had various impacts on one or more of these attributes, culminating in an overall impact on recreation resources. These overall impacts were compared with each other to come up with a relative expression of the magnitude of the impact. Each issue is discussed individually in the text and references are provided to more detailed information.

No single alternative stood out in all areas as either positive or negative (although Alternative 1 was generally more negative). Alternative 4 offers the best solution for the transportation network, and Alternative 3 would have the fewest environmental impacts. However, Alternative 3 performs the poorest in terms of the overall transportation analysis, and even poorer than the No Action Alternative.

There are significant unavoidable adverse impacts for all the build alternatives, including increased amounts of impervious area, acquisition of right-of-way, displacement of businesses, vegetation loss, and construction impacts such as increased noise, traffic delays, and temporary utility disruptions. All alternatives would also have cumulative impacts. These impacts would primarily affect traffic conditions, and the transportation analysis was performed in consideration of the effects of other future transportation improvements in Downtown Redmond. Cumulative effects are primarily positive, as shown in the analysis.

In terms of cumulative environmental impacts, all alternatives would contribute to loss of vegetation and wildlife habitat, increased impervious surface area, increased noise, and increased emissions and other factors that contribute to air quality. However, these impacts can be mitigated and no significant cumulative impacts are anticipated.

Selection of a preferred alternative must first and foremost consider the project's needs. Alternative 4 would best meet the Downtown transportation goals stated in the RCP and the DTMP. The negative impacts associated with Alternative 4 would be primarily in the amount of right-of-way and displacements required. However, these impacts can be mitigated by providing compensation at fair market value to all affected business and property owners. However, this compensation contributes to the greater cost of Alternative 4. Alternative 4 is adjacent to the heron rookery parcel and may have impacts on the colony. Alternative 4 also uses the bulk of the King County shop site parcel. However, the remaining portions of the parcel could be joined with the heron rookery parcel and the BNSF Railroad corridor to provide additional open space and buffer area for the heron rookery.

**Table 1.2:
Bear Creek Parkway Extension Evaluation Matrix**

CRITERIA	No Action	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Comments	Reference to Text
Transportation							
Traffic Circulation (LOS)	N/A*	●	●	○	●	See Appendix C (<i>Key to Transportation Rankings</i>)	pp. 3-82 to 3-121
Through Traffic (travel time)	N/A*	●	●	○	●		
Transit Service	N/A*	○	●	●	●		
Non-Motorized	N/A*	○	○	●	●		
Parking	N/A*	○	○	○	○		
Freight Mobility	N/A*	●	●	○	●		
Construction Impacts to Traffic	N/A*	○	○	○	○		
Earth							pp. 3-1 to 3-4
Cut and Fill Quantities	○						
Landslide Hazard Areas	○	○	○	○	○	No landslide hazard areas within the project area	
Seismic Hazard Areas	○	○	○	○	○	All are within the seismic hazard area	
Erosion Hazard Areas	○	○	○	○	○	No erosion hazard areas within the project area	
Soils	○	○	○	○	○	No unstable or problematic soils	
Water							pp. 3-13 to 3-21
Surface Water	○	○	○	○	○	All will discharge treated stormwater to the river. Alt. 1 creates more impervious surface area.	
Ground Water	○	○	○	○	○	No impacts to groundwater	
Floodplains	○	○	○	○	○	Alt. 3 avoids roadway work in the floodplain. All will require construction of a spillway within the floodplain.	
Aquifer Recharge Areas	○	○	○	○	○	All are within a high-significance aquifer recharge area. Groundwater quality will be maintained through stormwater control.	
Plants and Animals							pp. 3-21 to 3-32
Habitat Loss	○	○	○	○	○	Alt. 1 uses a large amount of grassland habitat and creates a barrier to wildlife movement. Alts 2, 3, and 4 use small amounts of upland forest habitat.	

Table 1.2 (continued)
Bear Creek Parkway Extension Evaluation Matrix

CRITERIA	No Action	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Comments	Reference to Text
Hérons	◐	◐	○	◑	○	Rating indicates potential impacts based on proximity to the colony. Alts 2 and 4 are closest to the largest portion of nesting site. If necessary, additional assessment will be conducted on selection of a preferred alternative.	
Salmon	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	No impacts to salmon anticipated.	
Wetlands	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	No known wetlands present in the project area.	
Land Use							pp. 3-42 to 3-54
Right-of-Way Requirements	◐	○	◑	◑	○	Alts 1 and 4 require approx. 4 ac of right-of-way. Alts 2 and 3 require approx. 3 ac.	
Displacements	◐	◑	○	◑	○	All require some business displacements. Alts 2 and 4 would require ≥5 displacements; Alts 1 and 3 would require ≤3 displacements	
Consistency with Approved Plans and Policies	○	○	◐	◐	◐	The No Action Alt. is inconsistent with planned transportation improvements for Downtown. Alt. 1 is inconsistent with policies for parks and open space.	
Use of King County Shop Site	◐	◐	○	◑	○	Alt. 1 does not use the site. Alts 2 and 4 use the greatest portion of the site.	
Air Quality	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	No adverse impacts to air quality are anticipated.	pp. 3-4 to 3-13
Noise	◐	◑	◑	◑	◑	All will increase noise to either residential areas or the heron rookery. No excessive impacts are anticipated.	pp. 3-33 to 3-42
Aesthetics	◐	○	◑	◑	◑	Some trees and vegetation removed with all. Alt. 1 creates the most noticeable visual impact.	pp. 3-64 to 3-70
Recreation	◐	○	◐	◑	◑	Alt. 1 affects the RTC Open Space and Trail and the Sammamish River Trail. Alts 3 and 4 provide connections to the future BNSF Trail.	pp. 3-70 to 3-78

Table 1.2 (continued)
Bear Creek Parkway Extension Evaluation Matrix

CRITERIA	No Action	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Comments	Reference to Text
Historic and Cultural Resources	◐	◑	◑	◑	◑	Alt. 1 has higher potential to disturb archaeological sites	pp. 3-78 to 3-82
Public Services	◐	◑	◑	◑	◑	All public services would be maintained – any impacts would be temporary	pp. 3-122 to 3-126
Utilities	◐	○	◑	◑	◑	Alt. 1 has more impacts to existing utilities on 162 nd Ave NE. Alts. 2, 3, and 4 have a higher need for new utilities.	pp. 3-122 to 3-126
Hazardous Materials	◐	◑	◑	◑	◑	All have potential to encounter hazardous materials either along 159 th Pl. NE or the King County Shop site, or both.	pp. 3-54 to 3-64
Cost	◐	○	◑	◑	○	Alts. 2 and 3 are under \$30 million. Alts. 1 and 4 are over \$30 million.	

Key to symbols:

○=More negative impact ◑=Some negative impact ◑=Little or no impact ◑=Some positive impact ●=More positive impact

* Transportation rankings were developed for each build alternative in terms of how each performs against the future No Action Alternative. Therefore, the No Action served as the baseline for comparison and is not ranked. See the text for a discussion of the overall poor performance of the No Action Alternative.

Project Phases and Timing

Scoping

The City of Redmond conducted an expanded scoping process (WAC-197-11-410) for the Bear Creek Parkway Extension project. As part of this process, the City filed a Notice of Application, Determination of Significance, and Request for Comments on Scope of SEIS on November 26, 2003. This Notice announced the City's intention to produce a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and outlined the issues proposed for discussion in the document. Comments on the scope of the SEIS were requested by December 29, 2003. Thirty-six written comments were received as of that date. The notice also announced a public information meeting held on December 11, 2003. Copies of the Notice and other scoping materials are presented in Appendix A. A Final Determination of Significance was issued on February 25, 2004 and mailed to commentors and agencies.

The Notice was sent to all addresses within 500 feet of the project area. It was also sent to all interested state and local government agencies along with information about the project purpose and alternatives. Agencies were invited to attend a separate agency scoping meeting also held on December 11, 2003.

A postcard invitation to the public information meeting was sent to over 3,000 households in the City of Redmond. A display advertisement was placed in the King County Journal on December 7, 2003.

The agency scoping meeting was held on December 11, 2003 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM at the Redmond City Hall Technology Center (15670 NE 85th Street, Redmond, Washington). Twelve agency representatives attended the meeting. City and consultant representatives gave a brief presentation of the proposed project and opened up the meeting for discussion. Comments centered on issues of water quality, the heron rookery, open space, and trails. Appendix A includes a summary of the comments received at the meeting.

The public information meeting was held on December 11, 2003 from 4:30 to 7:30 PM in the same location, and 34 people signed in for this meeting. City and consultant staff gave two brief presentations of the proposed project at 5:00 and 6:30 PM. The remainder of the meeting was conducted as an open house, with City and consultant staff available to answer questions and receive comments. Appendix A includes a summary of the comments received at this meeting. Comments received at the meeting and in subsequent letters focused on the traffic impacts of the various alternatives, access to Redmond Town Center and other downtown businesses, impacts to open space and water resources, impacts to herons, and pedestrian/bicycle/trail connections.

Future Environmental Analysis

The majority of the environmental analysis for the Bear Creek Parkway Extension project is contained within this SDEIS. Future analyses will potentially include a Biological Evaluation for compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and/or cultural resource documentation and consultation for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Should these analyses be required, they will be conducted after a preferred alternative is selected.

Additional surveys will be conducted prior to construction, to identify the presence of raptors and other migratory birds and nests and to document the size of any trees to be removed. These surveys will be done for compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Redmond policies regarding protection of critical habitat (CDG 20D.140.10-070) and tree protection (CDG 20D.80.20).

Design and Construction

Design and implementation of the project could occur following environmental review and permitting. Construction could occur in 2005. If project implementation is delayed, any associated environmental impacts associated with construction would also be delayed (e.g., potential erosion of cleared areas, loss of habitat and/or vegetation, increased runoff, and creation of dust and noise).

A delay in project implementation would contribute to declining levels of service on the existing street network, because traffic volumes are expected to continue to increase. Longer travel delays could negatively impact air quality. Delaying the project would restrict implementation of other aspects of the DTMP.